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C O N F I D E N T I A L RIGA 000877

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/27/2017  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [KCFE](#) [OSCE](#) [LG](#)  
SUBJECT: LATVIA ON MADRID: NERVOUS ON CFE

REF: A) STATE 157672 B) STATE 158847 C) STATE 159773

Classified By: Charge d'affaires a.i., Stuart M. Seldowitz. Reason: 1.  
4 (D)

¶1. (C) Summary: Latvia is wary of the Spanish/German effort on CFE in Madrid and greatly appreciates the US support for core principals in this area. Latvia will make a strong statement of support for ODIHR and election observation. They support the closure of the OSCE mission in Croatia and support Kazakhstan for CiO, but are flexible on the timing. End summary.

¶2. (C) Pol/Econ Chief met November 27 with Latvian Political Director Ilgvars Klava to discuss the upcoming OSCE ministerial in Madrid. FM Riekstins will lead the delegation and Klava will attend. For over a week, Klava has called us about the German/Spanish proposal for a meeting on CFE on the margins of the ministerial. The Latvians fear it will be a repeat of the German seminar in October, which left the Latvians very uneasy about willingness of other allies to hear Latvian security concerns.

¶3. (C) Pol/Econ Chief reviewed our latest points on CFE (ref C) and drew on ref B to provide an overview of our views on the conference, highlighting our insistence on a meeting of NATO members prior to the meeting at 30 or 34. Klava said he greatly appreciated the US standing firm on our key points and referred to A/S Fried's commitment while in Riga last month "nothing about you without you." Unfortunately, the Latvians only learned November 26 about the timing of the CFE meeting in Madrid November 28 and the preceding NATO discussion, and no one from Riga can make it there in time. Latvia's OSCE Ambassador will represent them in those meetings. Klava added that Turkey wanted a "like minded" group meeting in advance of the NATO meeting and Latvia would likely attend that as well. Klava also appreciated our strong message that any statement, if one is issued at all, include reference to the Istanbul Commitments as well as to the threatened Russian suspension.

¶4. (C) On other issues on the OSCE agenda (ref A), Klava said the intervention for Riekstins included a strong defense of ODIHR and a call to all member states that ODIHR election monitors be able to operate without restriction. Latvia supports closure of the OSCE mission in Croatia, he added. Finally, Klava said that Latvia supported Kazakhstan's bid for the chairmanship. "If Russia can lead the Council of Europe, why not Kazakhstan for OSCE?" he asked rhetorically. Latvia is flexible on timing of the Kazakh time as CiO, though. Klava asked about reports he heard from some Europeans that the US had agreed to accept Kazakhstan as CiO for 2010. Pol/econ chief responded that, as he understood it, Washington had not yet taken a final position on these issues.  
SELDOWITZ